

March 1, 2007

The Utah Legislature has approved the consolidation of eligibility workers from the Department of Health's (DOH) Bureau of Eligibility Services with the Department of Workforce Services (DWS). The transfer of staff and budget will take place on July 1, 2007. We are committed to see that consolidation will be in the best interest of the citizens we serve – those in need of public assistance in a range of programs including Medicaid, TANF, Food Stamps, Childcare, and General Assistance.

As many of you are aware, the discussion of this consolidation has been ongoing for the past few years and during this past legislative session.

Currently both departments have Medicaid eligibility workers. It is our goal, through this consolidation, to improve customer service, access, and operation efficiencies. This includes allowing those in need of the programs mentioned above to interact with only one Medicaid eligibility system.

Both DWS and DOH support maintaining staffing of positions currently based in, and financially supported by, health care facilities and specialized long-term care facilities. DWS will work closely with DOH to determine other specialized caseload staffing needs, including assisting special needs customers through the eligibility process. Being accountable, accurate, and timely for Medicaid eligibility determinations is of paramount importance to both departments and we are committed to maintaining exemplary customer service.

As mentioned above, the consolidation will take place on July 1, 2007. We are aware of concerns related to this merger that have been expressed by our employees, customers, and members of the health care community throughout the state. Our intent is to meet with representatives of the advocate and health care community and front-line staff and management staff to share our plans and solicit their recommendations to facilitate a smooth transition. As we work through the process, we will make every attempt to keep the lines of communication open in various ways and address any questions and concerns. For the latest information regarding the consolidation go to the following intranet link. <https://dws.utah.gov/divisions/edo/dohtransition/dwsdefault.asp>

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